

Graduation Brings Smiles from Across the Miles

By Sgt. Nicole Kojetin
1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - His eyes searched the sea of jewel-colored robes for his son just like any other father would do on graduation day, but instead of doing it from the stands surrounded by his family, he was sitting in a conference room in the Multi-National Division - Baghdad headquarters building here watching the ceremony on a television.

Prior to the Killeen High School's graduation ceremony May 27, Staff Sgt. Ronald Rora had laughed outside talking about how he was worried this day would never come, joking with the other fathers about what he was going to convert his newly-graduated son's room into.

But eventually, the truth came out.

"I am totally proud of him," he said after talking to his family via video teleconference. "He's been a 'brainiac' throughout school. He has always done really well in school. He worked really



(Photo by Sgt. Nicole Kojetin, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

Waving at his son, Staff Sgt. Ronald Rora, a medic from Headquarters Co., 2nd Bn., 5th Cav. Regt., was able to participate in his son, Domonique's graduation ceremony May 27 even though he is in Iraq. When Dominique walked across the stage, he was able to see his dad via video teleconference.

hard to get this far."

Domonique Rora was enrolled in a college "prep" program at Killeen High School and spent many nights staying up doing homework until 1 or 2 o'clock in

the morning.

The hard work was obvious when he walked across the stage with his smile

See **Long Distance** Page 3



(Photo by Spc. Alexis Harrison, 2-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

Paying Respect

Soldiers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division lay U.S. flags at the base of a wreath to honor their fallen comrades during a Memorial Day service at Forward Operating Base Union III in Baghdad May 28.

Soldiers Successfully Hunt Terrorists, Weapons

By Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons
4-1 Inf. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers and Iraqi Security Forces netted 139 weapons caches and took 372 weapons off the streets of the southern Rashid District of the Iraqi capital.

Soldiers from the 4th "Dragon" Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division and 3rd "Arrowhead" Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division conducted clearing operations in the Rashid District of southwestern Baghdad for more than three weeks, in an operation dubbed Dragon Fire West/Arrowhead Strike 10. Nearly 2,000 Iraqi troops from the 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi National Police Brigade and the 1st Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division contributed to the operation as well.

The operation, which kicked off May 2, cleared 45 neighborhoods in the West Rashid security district, result-

ing in the detention of more than 90 individuals suspected as active members in anti-Iraqi movements. "This operation reduced the number of (Al Qaeda in Iraq) and (Jaysh Al Mahdi) anti-Iraqi force personnel ... along with a significant amount of AIF materiel," said Col. Steve Townsend, commander of the 3-2nd SBCT.

Terrorist activity declined 22 percent over the four weeks prior to the start of the operation.

"I can confidently say that a countless number of Rashid's children have been saved from the dangers of these bombs and explosives, thanks to the efforts of the Iraqi Security Forces and our Soldiers," said Col. Ricky D. Gibbs, commander of the 4th IBCT.

Among the larger cache finds during the operation, more than 1,000 explosives and large caliber munitions were captured and three complete 60mm mortar systems confiscated.

Additionally, one truck-



(Photo by Pfc. Benjamin Gable, 7th MPAD)

Ceremonial Firing

Spc. Juan Caballero, a South Bend, Ind., native with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, and members of his firing squad, practice their techniques and drills before the "Dagger" Brigade Memorial Day ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

borne improvised explosive destroyed before they could be
device and three vehicle-borne used against the Iraqi people or
IEDs were discovered and Coalition Forces.

Arabic Phrase of the Day

mabruuk

**Defined:
congratulations**

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 110
Low: 86



Tomorrow

High: 110
Low: 85



Thursday

High: 108
Low: 84

Commanding General: Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil, Jr.
Public Affairs Officer: Lt. Col. Scott Bleichwehl
Command Information Supervisor: Master Sgt. Dave Larsen
NCOIC, Print Production: Sgt. Michael Garrett
Editor: Spc. Jeffrey Ledesma
Staff Writers: Sgt. Nicole Kojetin, Spc. L.B. Edgar, Spc. Shea Butler, Pfc. Ben Gable and Pfc. William Hatton
Contributing Writers: Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons, Sgt. Robert

Strain and Spc. Alexis Harrison
Contact the *Daily Charge* at VOIP 242-4093, DSN 318-847-2855 or e-mail david.j.larsen@mnd-b.army.mil.

The Daily Charge is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the *Daily Charge* are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the 1st Cavalry Division. All editorial content of the *Daily Charge* is prepared, edited, provided and approved by 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs Office.

Graduates, Deployed Parents Defeat Distance

By Sgt. Robert Strain
1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

BELTON, Texas - For many parents, there is a list of events in their child's life that are not to be missed. Things like their first steps, their first day of school and their high school graduation top that list for many of those parents.

However, sometimes things like deploy-



(Photo by Sgt. Robert J. Strain, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

Staff Sgt. Ronald Rora (right, on the screen), watches as his son Domonique prepares to walk across the stage and receive his diploma May 27.

ment may cause military parents to miss some of those events.

Thanks to modern technology, some Soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division currently deployed to Iraq, graduation is one major event they didn't have to miss.

The First Team and the Killeen Independent School District teamed up to bring families together during this year's high school graduations by broadcasting the ceremonies via video teleconference to forward operating bases in Iraq.

The broadcast gave the graduate and their families the opportunity to talk before the ceremony, and the parent in Iraq the ability to watch the ceremony live.

With parents in Iraq shown on large screens at the Bell County Exposition Center in Belton, Texas, as well as a small TV at the base of the stage, the Soldiers were able to cheer on their son or daughter as if they were right there with all the other parents.

For Domonique Rora, who graduated with honors from Killeen High School May 27, the opportunity to talk to his dad, Staff Sgt. Ronald Rora, a medic with the 1st Cavalry Division in Baghdad, made the fact that he wasn't home a little easier to bear.

"I'm really excited about it, and it makes

it a little bit easier," he said.

Many Soldiers tried to schedule their rest and recuperation leave so that they would be home during their child's graduation, but not all of the parents were able to make it home.

Rora explained that his father had planned to take his leave during graduation, but when a family emergency brought him home earlier than expected, he wasn't able to take leave again for the graduation.

Rora is no stranger to deployment, this is his father's second, but just because it's happened before doesn't make it any easier.

Rora explained that it is harder this time around, with his dad unable to be here for the graduation and when he has to go off to college later in the summer.

Rora said he has big plans for the summer, including moving to Florida the day after graduation and starting college in July.

He plans to major in biochemistry and pre-med at the University of Florida, even though his father is a Florida State fan.

All in all, Rora was very glad to have the opportunity to have his father at his graduation, even if he wasn't there physically.

"It was very moving, very touching," Rora said, knowing that his father was watching him walk across the stage and receive his high school diploma.

Parents Make it to Graduation Over 7,000 Miles Away

Long Distance From Page 1

beaming as the announcer read off the scholarships he earned for college.

Thousands of miles away, his dad was smiling just as big as he waved into the camera hoping that his son could see him.

Rora's family is used to him being gone by now. His first tour to Iraq ended just six months prior to coming over for this deployment.

"If we are extended, that means I will have spent three Thanksgivings, three Christmas's and three News

Year's in a row over here," said Rora, who is a medic for Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. "It's hard, but I think it is harder on them."

While his family may be used to absence, that doesn't necessarily make it any easier. Big milestones such this graduation day remind the 16-year Army veteran how much he misses his family.

"I really wish that I was able to spend more time with him through the years. That is my regret," said the

Jacksonville, Fla. native.

In his many military absences, his wife, Denise, has been holding down the fort at home. As he watched his son cross the stage he knew, much of the credit goes to her.

"When kids are little they just deal with (the moves and the military life). They are just resilient and bounce back so easily," he said. "When they get older, they start to act out. She has been the one that has to deal with that the most."

Though he already knew that she was doing a great job, watching his son graduate con-

firmed it.

"She's done the bulk of the work," he said.

In two years, his second son, Bryant, will be graduating from high school and Rora hopes that he will be able to be there in person.

"I really wanted to be there for this one," Rora said. "I am glad I (was) able to watch it, though. Hopefully, I will be there for the next one."

Domonique is leaving for college on a full scholarship to the University of Florida. Rora plans on being retired, and in the audience in person, by the time Domonique graduates again.

Hot Summer Months Mean Watching Diet, Physical Activity, Supplements

By Spc. Alexis Harrison
2-1 Cav. Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PROSPERITY, Iraq - While in Iraq, many Soldiers take the opportunity to focus on getting healthy and working out.

Some of these Soldiers run, some walk, some hit the basketball court, some play football and some hit the weight rooms. For a small portion of these Soldiers looking to get fit, supplements might seem like an easy way to get fast results. Unfortunately, while some supplements help, others might do more damage than what they're worth.

As temperatures in Baghdad easily peak 100 degrees, the need for proper nutrition rises just as quickly as the mercury.

Drinking plenty of water and eating a well-balanced

diet are two things important to surviving the heat according to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team's surgeon, Lt. Col. Margret Merino.

She said that knowing what you're putting in your body can be one of the easiest ways to get through these hot summer months while still achieving your weight loss or body building goals.

"Right now, we're trying to educate leaders and Soldiers to the dangers linked to supplement use in hot weather," the Buffalo, N.Y., native said.

Some supplements can't really hurt you. If taken improperly, the worst that could happen is either nothing at all or a little extra flab around your waist if you don't actually exercise while using them.

Protein is a very popular supplement that's designed to fuel your muscles with the food and amino acids necessary to grow and repair them-

selves. Taking a protein supplement without exercising is basically the same as eating extra food. It amounts to extra calories your body doesn't need. Your body will in turn take these extra calories and store them as fat.

Creatine is another supplement designed to draw water from your bloodstream into your muscles giving you a svelte appearance, more stamina and bigger "pumps" in the weight room. Again, just taking creatine won't help you unless you're on a good diet and exercise program.

The downside to creatine, said Merino, is its design. It takes water vital to the rest of your body and stores it in your muscles, effectively robbing the rest of your body of the hydration it needs.

Some of the most abused supplements of all are the ones that promise to help you shed pound after pound of unwanted fat. These types of supplements usually contain copious amounts of caffeine which will dehydrate you faster than wearing your gear all day.

Now, is a little caffeine bad? Not necessarily, Merino said.

Caffeine has shown its value by giving a jump start to a routine and decrease pain responsiveness. However, a lot of diet pills contain more than 100 milligrams of caffeine per pill. That's the equivalent of about 3 cups of the dining facility's best coffee per pill, and some recommended doses are two pills three times a day.

Of all the herbal supple-

ments out there, ephedrine was given the spotlight of shame a few years ago after Minnesota Vikings player, Korey Stringer collapsed and later died of heat-related injuries directly linked to use of ephedrine-containing supplements.

Merino said that ephedrine, synepherine and caffeine-containing supplements act as amphetamines, effectively raising the body's core temperature and not letting the body cool itself. This, she said, could lead to a heat injury or worse.

Capt. Ken Murray, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team's medical planner, said that while working in the emergency room while stationed on Fort Bragg, N.C., he witnessed first-hand how taking supplements and too much heat and exertion could lead to serious consequences.

"On numerous occasions I saw guys in the Airborne and Special Forces be brought into the emergency room and need to be resuscitated because they were taking supplements while being out in the heat," said the Baton Rouge, La., native.

Both Murray and Merino agreed that drinking water, following work/rest cycles and having a good diet are the best ways to combat heat injuries.

Merino urges anyone considering starting a new diet or thinking about taking supplements to go to their local medical clinic and consult with a health professional to assess the risks and the effects.



(Photo by Spc. Alexis Harrison, 2-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

A handful of the wrong dietary supplements could cause heat-related health issues for Soldiers. Before starting a diet in the sweltering Iraqi summer heat, Soldiers are encouraged to talk it over with a health professional first.